Director of Central Intelligence

Secret

25X1

Nigeria: The Evolution of Foreign Policy and Civilian Rule

Interagency Intelligence Memorandum

Secret

NI IIM 78-10016
3 August 1978

Copy No 239

NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION
Unauthorized Disclosure Subject to Criminal Sanctions

DISSEMINATION CONTROL ABBREVIATIONS

NOFORN–	Not Releasable to Foreign Nationals
NOCONTRACT–	Not Releasable to Contractors or Contractor/Consultants
PROPIN–	Caution—Proprietary Information Involved
NFIBONLY–	NFIB Departments Only
ORCON–	Dissemination and Extraction of Information Controlled by Originator
REL . . .–	This Information has been Authorized for Release to . . .

25X1

NFAC publications are available on microfiche. To get a

25X1

25X1

NIGERIA: THE EVOLUTION OF FOREIGN POLICY AND CIVILIAN RULE

SECRET

25X1

25X1

SECRET

CONTENTS

ANNEXES

(Published separately)

FOREWORD

The turnover to civilian rule in Nigeria is scheduled for October 1979. This development, and those related to the period of transition which is about to begin, raise questions, not only of how the advent of civilian rule is likely to affect Nigeria's relations with the United States, but also of how Nigerians involved in this process see their interests and role in international affairs and what the main emphases of Nigerian foreign policy are likely to be.[1]

Analysts are generally agreed that the uncertainties surrounding the transition are so great that they cannot predict firmly that civilian rule will, in fact, be installed. They believe, however, that the odds favor a successful transition, particularly because the Nigerian military leaders themselves appear still strongly committed to their own timetable. This paper, therefore, approaches the foreign policy issue from the standpoint that civilian rule will be achieved by October 1979, although we have also considered whether a turbulent passage toward that goal could have significant repercussions.

It is too early to attempt to forecast in any detail the personalities who will lead Nigeria or the specific courses these leaders might follow during ensuing years. In one sense, then, this is an interim report. We would emphasize our belief, however, that the basic factors that limit the range of Nigeria's policy options will favor a relatively high degree of continuity, and we have, accordingly, examined in some depth these basic background factors.

[1] A study of the first of these questions was requested of the Director of Central Intelligence by the Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. The present memorandum responds to this request as well as to the additional issues. It was produced under the auspices of the National Intelligence Officer for Africa, and major contributions, including the annexes being distributed separately, were developed by analysts in NFAC/ORPA, NFAC/OER, NFAC/OCR, NFAC/OGCR, DIA/DB-3, and State/INR. In addition, representatives and analysts from NSA, DIA, Army, Air Force, INR, various components of CIA, the Treasury, and the Department of Energy participated in the coordination process and the discussions.

PRINCIPAL JUDGMENTS

We believe that the quality of Nigerian relations with the United States during the next 18 months or so will depend primarily on US policy, with a strong but not completely exclusive focus on US policy toward southern Africa. Other Nigerian concerns in relations with the United States—oil prices, availability of development capital and technology, North-South and nonaligned issues, inter-African security problems, perceptions of Soviet and Cuban activity in Africa, US arms sales—will be secondary.

Nigerian policy will remain relatively straightforward on the southern African problem. The Nigerians will continue to support negotiations in the southern African context, but only as long as these negotiations hold serious promise of achieving the objective the Nigerians hold in common with other Africans—the dismantling of white minority governments in favor of rule by or in the name of the black populations. The Nigerians will simultaneously support the liberation groups—though not by significant direct military intervention—and the tactical flexibility that a Nigerian regime shows in its day-to-day relationships should not be allowed to create the illusion that its objective has moderated.

On the secondary issues, we expect to continue to see a good deal of pragmatism from the Nigerians. The amount of pragmatism, however, will be influenced by the atmosphere created by perceived US action or inaction in the main arena.

We do not now see a civilian regime doing much to alter these basic approaches. While there is certain to be a substantial amount of vocal militancy—which will be sincerely felt regarding southern Africa—the fundamental elements in Nigeria's economic, social, and demographic situation argue for continuity and compromise as against sudden and radical change.

In our view, the odds still favor a successful transition to civilian rule in Nigeria, meeting the October 1979 deadline to which the military leaders remain committed. There will surely be turbulent

periods during this passage, and we make no forecast now as to how long civilian rule will last once it is installed. But we believe that the process will have at most only a peripheral effect on Nigerian foreign policy during the coming 15 months.

Specifically, we believe that the Nigerians:

— Will work with the United States on the Rhodesia problem, but will not accept any arrangement that is not also acceptable to the Patriotic Front and will do relatively little more under present circumstances to persuade the PF leaders to moderate their positions.

— Will work similarly with regard to Namibia (South-West Africa).

— Will view with grave suspicion any appearances that the United States is expanding areas of cooperation with South Africa in any field—political, economic, or nuclear.

— Will gradually become more uneasy about the role of Cubans and Soviets in Africa but will be reserved toward efforts to construct an international African security force.

— Will not turn further toward cooperation with the USSR in international arenas unless Western efforts in southern Africa collapse utterly.

— Will continue in their domestic affairs to function so that—within the limits imposed by nationalistic political requirements—they will attract foreign investment and assistance.

— Will, in the United Nations, the Organization of Petroleum-Exporting Countries, and other international forums, seek ways to make visible their sense that their country, given its size and resources, should continue to play a leading role in African and Third World affairs.

DISCUSSION

The Setting

1. The conduct of foreign affairs in Nigeria under military rule has been only one aspect of an effort by the leaders of the armed forces to give their country a government that is reasonably honest, relatively commonsensible, and effective within the limits of the possible. At the same time they have sought to convey a sense of dynamic, unifying, and purposeful movement toward a bright future commensurate with the country's size and resources.

2. The tone and content of Nigeria's relationships have reflected a mix of these aspirations. The personal willingness of most of the top leaders to engage repeatedly in serious attempts to mediate among other Africans, even when the prospects for successful mediation appear remote, feeds the Nigerians' sense of their own present and future importance. Practicality,

25X6

characterizes the Nigerian leadership's approach to concrete problems of foreign economic relationships. For example, the Nigerians are now successfully adjusting oil prices and production to the realities of the international competitive situation, after a period of confusion compounded by their fears that they were being "had" by the major European and American private companies with which they are, in effect, partners.

3. At the same time, the Nigerians are capable of indulging themselves in the rhetoric of anti-imperialism, aiming at phantasmagoric as well as real-life targets. Among a vocal minority, capitalism tends to be synonymous with corruption, while socialism equates vaguely with virtue. Much more seriously, the Nigerians, in common with other Africans, are offended to the very depths of their psyches by the racist attitudes and practices of the South African Government and the white settlers in Rhodesia. The frustrations and indignities of a colonial past can be focused on these issues at relatively small cost to relationships in a complex real world. Even here, however, under the military regime there has persisted a sense that day-to-day considerations affecting domestic development take some measure of precedence over attitudes arising out of foreign affairs: "explanations" and "corrections" are accepted fairly readily, for example, if they have the effect of enabling Western companies doing business in South Africa to continue to contribute importantly to the Nigerian economy.

4. In a similar vein, Nigeria has given relatively uncritical support to the Third World approach to the complex of issues in the North-South dialogue; but in areas where a specific interest is perceived—such as in actual negotiation of technology transfers and in arguing the question of jurisdiction over seabed economic zones—Nigerian delegations moderate their practice and their diplomatic positions.[2]

5. In the light of these sets of attitudes, two basic conclusions about current Nigerian foreign policy would seem possible. First, foreign affairs per se are more peripheral than central in the eyes of the present and potential Nigerian leaders. Second, both the practical and the ideological sides of Nigerian thinking and feeling about where the country stands in foreign relationships are comparatively "fixed" and noncontroversial. No Nigerian is likely to argue for a reversal of attitudes toward white rule in southern Africa, no Nigerian is likely to debate seriously at this time the importance of oil income to Nigeria's economic and social development, no Nigerian is likely to urge that Nigeria should desert the cause of the less developed countries (or follow that cause slavishly when Nigeria has interests of its own), and no Nigerian is likely to contend seriously that Nigeria's internal problems are so pressing that it should abandon claims to the leading role in black Africa.

6. Both these conclusions are central to our view of how Nigeria's relations with the present superpowers, the USSR and the United States, have evolved.[3] Nigeria's basic attitudes have remained largely constant; changes in the relationships have derived from shifts (or at least shifts as perceived by the Nigerians) in the attitudes and policies, or the degree of activity

[2] See annex A (Nigeria in the North-South Dialogue).

[3] See annex B (Nigerian Views of the USSR).

in African affairs, of the superpowers. It is they who move, not the Nigerians.

7. The USSR has appeared in a relatively favorable light, deriving historically from the response the Soviets made in supplying military equipment to the Nigerian Federals during the Nigerian civil war. Since then, the USSR along with East European governments has participated in some of the more grandiose and visible projects which the Nigerians tend to see as public symbols of their status. Moreover, the Soviets—and, most actively, the Cubans—have unequivocally associated themselves with the overthrow of white racist domination in southern Africa. When, however, the Soviets/Cubans come closer to home, as with their presence in neighboring Benin, the Nigerians' suspicion and concern are aroused. There has also been evidence recently that the Nigerians are taking a dimmer view of Soviet and Cuban hyperactivity in Africa generally.

8. Over the past 18 months, what the Nigerians have perceived as a dramatic shift in American official attitudes has brought a change in the climate of US-Nigerian relations. As seen in Lagos, the US leadership has moved significantly toward adopting a more correct (that is, more Nigerian) view of the problems of southern Africa, has shown itself more attentive if not more responsive to the needs and problems of the less developed countries, and generally has given higher priority to international questions that Nigerians would assess as important. But a great new day of US-Nigerian relations has not dawned for Nigerians. There is a substantial substratum of suspicion that elements in the United States seen as responsible for earlier, less attentive attitudes are still influential; there is a feeling that, as a superpower, the United States has interests that diverge from Nigeria's in some fundamental ways; and, most recently, the US association with the French and Francophone African leadership in rescuing Zaire's President Mobutu has fed the fears of neocolonialism. There is in Lagos an underlying feeling that the "new look" in American approaches to Africa is a matter more of personalities than settled policy and is very possibly transient.

9. Looked at from the Nigerian end, then, the question posed for this paper might well be: How are American attitudes and policies toward us Nigerians likely to change as we move from military to civilian rule, and as the US administration adjusts its policies in the light of its ongoing argument with the USSR? In the Nigerian perspective, the quality of US-Nigerian relations is likely to depend much more on what the United States does than on what the Nigerians do.

Basic Factors for the Future: Nigeria's Assets and Liabilities

Human Resources

10. In Africa, south of the Sahara, Nigeria stands as a regional giant in sheer size of population—well over twice the numbers of Ethiopia and nearly three times those of its next nearest competitors, South Africa and Zaire. It is the 10th most populous country on the globe—68,486,000 is the mid-1978 estimate used by the United Nations.[4] But Nigeria is also one of the most ethnically diverse states in Africa: there are more than 250 "tribes"; no single language is spoken by a majority of the people; and, while the three largest ethnic groups—the Hausa-Fulani of the north, and the Yoruba and Ibo of the south—make up better than 60 percent of the total population, there are 10 other groups with populations of more than a half million each.

11. Ethnic divisions are both complicated and reinforced by religious differences. Islam, arriving across the African Sahel from the east since the 13th century, has long come to dominate in northern Nigeria and is moving southward. Coastal and other peoples of the southern regions, particularly the active and assertive Ibo, have adopted and adapted Christianity from European and American models, to the extent that about a third of the population is now thought to claim to be Christian. Somewhere around a fifth of all Nigerians retain animist faiths and practices which are without political significance in a party sense but which have a pervasive influence on the tone of daily life in all parts of the country.

12. This population is growing rapidly—at the present 2.85-percent annual rate (the US rate is 0.93) it will double in 24 years. It is also youthful, like those of other developing nations—about 46 percent is under 15 years of age, with a median age of less than 17 (the US median age is 28). Moreover, these trends are still developing; the growth rate has been rising steadily since the 1960s, while the proportion of active adults, 15 to 64, becomes smaller. Even with the current UN estimate, in the early 1990s there will be 100 million Nigerians, still only a little better than half of them over 15 years of age.

13. Some of Nigeria's demographic trends have specific political consequences, at least potentially.

[4] Nigerian demographic data are among the poorest in the world, and we suspect that this figure is on the low side. The World Bank, for example, shows Nigeria's 1976 population as 77.1 million. See annex C for a more detailed discussion.

There is some evidence that the Muslim north is growing faster than the rest of the country; this has produced pressure or temptation (as in Lebanon, for example) to manipulate the figures for electoral purposes. Cities (there are 26 besides Lagos with populations of over 100,000) are clearly growing at a much faster rate than the rest of the country, and as a result urban services are notoriously behind elemental demands. Nigeria's "progress," as seen by both educated Nigerians and foreign visitors, tends to be measured by visible improvements in urban sanitation, traffic control, responses to street crime, and other not unfamiliar phenomena.

14. The youthfulness of the population also produces grim economic statistics, if the ideal is full, useful employment. Of the more than 700,000 Nigerians who are believed each year to become new candidates for entry into the country's wage-earning labor force (3 to 4 million total), only 116,000 are even expected to obtain paid jobs, according to the 1975-80 Nigerian development plan. At a guess, some 200,000 become technically unemployed, while most of the rest statistically disappear into the subsistence economy. Moreover, the inequities of income distribution are growing, while real income per capita is declining as a result of inflation in the face of a general wage freeze.

15. But the paradoxes encountered in assessing Nigeria's human resources are most evident in education. By black African regional standards (that is, excluding South Africa), the 50,000 secondary-school and 2,000 university graduates that Nigeria produces annually stand as a gigantic achievement and an unequaled reservoir of talent and productive activity. As compared with the perceived needs of the country, however, the results are mixed: a continuing shortage of skilled and semiskilled workers and managers; an over-abundance of the unskilled and, though to a lesser degree, of the supereducated who have chosen fields, like law, which are already crowded, or who are trained to work in an environment that does not exist in the present stage of development of the country's technical infrastructure. In education, moreover, there evidently are serious regional disparities within the country: southerners generally have a much higher literacy rate than northerners. A disproportionate number of Ibo—to give another example, this time from within the south—have attended universities in Western Europe or the United States.

16. Taken by themselves, Nigeria's demographic statistics surely do not carry any certain meaning for foreign policy. Nevertheless, it seems possible to suggest some influences that a consciousness of such statistics may have on the individuals and groups who finally shape Nigerian attitudes in foreign affairs:

— The sheer size of the population tends to drown extremist movements and tendencies that are primarily ideological rather than ethnic or regional at their base. The country is almost certainly too big and too diverse in its bigness to be stampeded by new radical doctrine.

— The diversity (as well as the recent history) of the country argues for caution and compromise among its leaders; serious division, pushed to extreme, spells secession of one or another of the major regions. The influence of this situation on foreign affairs would appear to be that it creates an atmosphere in which compromise and caution are more normal behavior, on most matters of most importance, than is extremism.

— Despite the two basic influences toward moderation and continuity, the demographic materials—a youthful population, wide disparities between rural and urban milieus, desperate overgrowth of cities, rampant unemployment despite a major educational program—are available to the demagogue, in or out of office, to use against foreign influences in specific cases, even though the existence of each of these unwelcome phenomena also argues that technical assistance from outside Africa is essential if "progress" is to be made against specific problems.

— Most directly relevant to foreign affairs in the more formal sense, the giant size of the political package that is contemporary Nigeria cannot fail to have an effect on the thinking of Nigerians, other Africans, and non-Africans about the country's place in the world. The size contributes to the Nigerian leaders' sense (or illusion) that they are leaders of a continent, not just of a country, that they have broad responsibilities in the world at large, and that they have assets which, if properly mobilized, can give effect to their policies. But the same size that inspires Nigerians creates anxiety outside Nigeria. The giant among smaller, less well endowed African countries is often, in the eyes of these latter, a bumbling, brash giant. Outside Africa, the country's size contributes to a tendency to extoll Nigeria's potential but deplore its actualities, to take the Nigerians seriously when words are important or valuable but to ignore the Nigerians

when the issue is the focused deployment of economic or military power.

Material Resources[5]

17. The ambivalences and ambiguities in the reactions produced by Nigeria's size are not much mitigated by contemplation of its material resources.

18. Since 1973, oil has been the dominant, overwhelming factor in the calculations of Nigeria's leaders regarding the country's future. It accounts for 35 percent of gross domestic product, 90 percent of foreign exchange earnings, and 80 percent of all public revenues. Nigeria is a close second to Saudi Arabia as a source of US oil imports, and the United States is also the biggest single customer, taking about half Nigeria's exports.[6]

19. Taken together with its burgeoning population, these facts in effect define the terms of Nigeria's dilemma in any attempt to make economic policy serve foreign policy interests. For Nigeria is not Saudi Arabia: the Nigerian leadership not only needs oil income to foster other economic development and to create public services, it cannot do without something close to present levels of income and/or production. And Nigeria is aware that its oil is a finite resource; at current production rates (between 1.5 and 2 million barrels per day) the currently estimated 20 billion barrels of proven reserves will last not much more than another 30 years; unless new fields are found and developed, this limitation will stand.

20. The Nigerians have not found a sure formula for maximizing the benefits from this depleting asset. They followed, until recently, an aggressive policy of restricting production combined with unilateral price increases to hike revenue per barrel. The international companies refused to play; investment in new fields dropped, maintenance of existing wells fell off and threatened further drops in production, and the market was opened to lower cost competition from the North Sea and Alaska. During the past year, and especially the past six months, the Nigerians have begun to work more closely with the companies, paying attention to their market forecasts and selectively reducing prices to meet the competition for the high-quality, light crudes that are Nigeria's specialty.

21. This experience does not encourage using oil as an instrument of foreign policy; the Nigerians' economic development ambitions leave them little flexibility and bargaining power in a practical sense. They are stuck in partnership with the industrial West—primarily the United States—unless and until a worldwide oil shortage becomes so acute that they can choose among potential customers, and this situation is not likely to emerge until after the term of this paper, if then.

22. Moreover, the ties that bind to the industrial West are not confined to oil. Plans have been made to develop Nigeria's liquefied natural gas (LNG) resources, but not only are foreign companies to provide a third of the cost of the single LNG facility now on the drawing boards but the United States is being counted as the sole market, an expectation that may well be too high in the light of the United States' own energy program. The building of a petrochemical industry, to provide, among other products, an increased supply of fertilizer for Nigerian agriculture, depends to a significant degree on foreign investment and technical support.

23. We do not believe that Nigerians are likely to adopt a radical socio-political-economic course in any foreseeable future. Only a major renunciation of progress as understood by Nigeria's western-educated elite, a concerted compulsory back-to-the-land movement, involving major social dislocations on the Cambodian model, would liberate Nigeria from the network of relationships that now link it to Western industrial capitalism. The costs, in human lives, would be enormous, for Nigeria is already facing a potential food crisis as a result of a decline in agricultural productivity since the civil war a decade ago. Formerly the world's leading peanut exporter, Nigeria now imports peanut oil; and, whereas in the mid-1960s it was the world's second largest cocoa producer, it is now fourth.

24. But continuing participation in the Western network does not mean that the relationships with Western Europe and the United States will be easy. Nigeria sees the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, the West's bete noire, as an extremely important and beneficial foreign association, despite its disappointment with the slimness of Arab, Iranian, and other OPEC support for southern Africa's struggle for majority rule. And the Nigerians are able, to some

[5] See also annex D (Economic Considerations).

[6] However, the United States supplies only 11 percent of Nigeria's total imports. Other trade partners include: West Germany (taking 8 percent of Nigeria's total exports, supplying 15 percent of its total imports); the United Kingdom (4 percent of exports, 21 percent of imports); Japan (0.2 percent of exports, 11 percent of imports); and France (7 percent of exports, 8 percent of imports). These are 1977 figures.

degree, to shift development contracts about among the firms of more favored nations. In this kind of game, US private firms, which were late in getting into the Nigerian market, could and indeed have suffered because US official policy was not seen as sufficiently supportive of Nigerian positions. A civilian regime would be no more likely than the military regime to use this kind of leverage.

The Nigerian Military Establishment

25. Before any balance of Nigeria's human and material resources can be struck, account must be taken of one of its unique features—an oversize, undertrained Army inherited from the civil war and preserved by the social need to keep manpower off the labor market and by the political dangers of demobilizing a large force out of a relatively privileged position. Nigeria has the largest military force in black Africa, a roughly estimated 235,000 plus.[7]

26. This oversized and underemployed force represents an overriding political factor with which any government must come to terms. Plans for reducing the strength of the armed forces, a necessity if the Army is to become more efficient and effective, have in the past been the cause of at least one coup attempt. Furthermore, plans for the country to be returned to civilian rule may well be opposed by those officers who feel they have not yet received their financial reward from military rule.

27. The existence of these important issues, demobilization and return to civilian rule, means that the military is more a threat to the government than a positive instrument of foreign policy. This threat is unlikely to recede once civilians take power, because the basic problems will remain. Indeed, if the new civilian government is perceived as pursuing policies inimical to the Army—or elements of it—the chances of a new military takeover will increase. The threat of a coup from disgruntled factions within the armed services is likely to remain an ill-defined yet everpresent factor arguing against bold action in both the domestic and foreign policy fields.

28. The Nigerian military establishment depends on a continuing flow of imported materiel; it will depend on the maintenance of economic relationships with the Western industrialized nations to pay for that materiel, unless the Nigerians wish to depend more closely on the USSR and Eastern Europe than they do now, and we see no sign of this.

[7] Army, 225,000; Navy, 3,700; Air Force, 6,600.

29. While Nigeria could employ force against its immediate neighbors, it has no expansionist goals and, unless provoked, it is highly unlikely to attack nearby countries. Unilateral action against targets farther afield at this point is precluded by lack of capability. On the other hand, participation in multilateral forces is a realistic possibility, and the most likely way that Nigerian military power would be used beyond its borders.[8] While on occasion Nigeria has provided logistic support and military materiel to insurgents in southern Africa, the country's leaders are determined to confine any overt and large-scale military activity to the framework of international organizations, the United Nations in particular. A Nigerian contingent contributed significantly to the UN peacekeeping operation in the Congo (now Zaire) during the early 1960s, and recently an infantry battalion has been sent to join troops from other nations forming the UN Interim Force in Lebanon. However, Nigeria's ability to contribute major forces to sustained multilateral operations is severely constrained by leadership, logistic, and maintenance deficiencies as well as by a shortage of trained manpower. Simply put, despite the huge size of Nigeria's armed services, it probably could not field and support more than a few effective ground force battalions at any one time.

Aspirations, Interests, and Civilian Rule

30. There is no doubt among observers that Nigerians aspire to an increasingly influential role, at least in Africa—and through Africa in the world at large. Aside from the North-South dialogue and the nonaligned movement, however, Nigerians have tended to focus their interests strongly within an African regional context, and we see little likelihood that these basic aspirations will change either with the arrival of civilian rule or during the process of transition to it, even though Nigerians themselves are even now volubly discussing particular issues and Nigeria's role in regard to them.

31. In terms of emotional commitment, ending white minority rule and apartheid as soon as possible in southern Africa is first among Nigeria's aspirations. Nigerian leaders use this issue, which they see as a moral one, to measure much of their relationship with other governments, and particularly with the United States. They believe that their country, as the most powerful black state, has a key role to play in this struggle, although they see this role as complementary

[8] See annex E (The Nigerian Armed Forces and International Peacekeeping).

rather than competitive to those played by the frontline states and liberation movements.

32. These alternatives clearly have the potential for increased friction with the United States and, probably marginally, some degree of closer collaboration with the USSR in specific, limited contexts, such as UN diplomacy or support for liberation movements. While few Nigerians think in terms of resorting to an oil embargo of their own against the United States and Europe to force the West into more militant support of their southern African objectives, they would certainly call for the imposition of UN sanctions against South Africa, including a ban on all nuclear cooperation and new investment as well as an oil embargo. Indeed, each threatened breakdown in negotiations and each fresh outrage perpetrated by the South Africans already puts a further strain on Nigeria's diplomatic impatience, and the leadership has already, in its own eyes, used up substantial credit with other African governments and the Third World generally by acceding to US requests to help the moderate elements in UN drafting sessions.

33. Since mid-1977, Nigeria has publicly stated its intention to establish a secondary and tertiary boycott of foreign firms that deal with the Republic of South Africa. Nigeria has for some time enforced a primary boycott with respect to South Africa, but to date has not formally established regulations to enforce a secondary/tertiary boycott policy. This policy has been applied selectively and infrequently, depending on its effect on Nigeria's economic needs. At least two US firms have been asked to sign contracts which included boycott clauses. Both refused, citing contravening US laws and regulations, and in both cases the offending language was removed. Pragmatists, especially the civilian bureaucrats, have opposed vigorous application of the secondary boycott policy for fear that it would discourage foreign trade and investment in Nigeria more than it would damage South Africa. However, a failure of other measures to bring about a change in southern Africa may increase pressure to implement such a policy. Again, such implementation would not be related to the installation of civilian in place of military rule.

34. In more strictly bilateral terms, Nigerians probably feel a greater potential kinship for the United States than for any other developed country. The danger in this is that perceived failure by the United States to show affinity for Nigeria is thus taken far more seriously by the Nigerians than, say, a similar failure by the USSR, which is perceived to have relatively little to offer Nigeria in a bilateral context. Previous disappointments with US attitudes have tended to merge, moreover, with the Nigerians' general hypersensitivity toward the economic power and what they imagine to be the subversive potential of foreign elements, East and West.[9]

35. It is not clear to us that there are any particular trends here; the aspirations and interests we have described appear so basic to the Nigerians' situation that there would appear to be little room for new courses to develop. Any adjustments we would expect to see in Nigerian strategies toward southern Africa would be matters of timing and tone rather than substance. It is important to note, however, that this substance is *already* "radical" from the perspective of conservative opinion in Western Europe and the United States. In the Nigerians' view, US policy has shifted toward their position, and while they have made a response by moderating their rhetoric and postponing some specific actions, their position has not shifted substantively.

36. Our view that the range of foreign affairs behavior to be expected of Nigeria is relatively narrow in substance—though very possibly broader in rhetoric—is reinforced by some consideration of the character of Nigeria's foreign policy leadership, present and potential.

37. Under the military regime, the principal actors have been the members of the Supreme Military Council (SMC), which deals with all aspects of government. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) is subordinate to an ad hoc group which includes not only the Head of State, General Obasanjo, but also at least General Danjuma, the Army Chief of Staff, and Brigadier Yar 'Adua, the Chief of Staff, Supreme Headquarters. Despite reported differences of approach and certainly of temperament on the part of individuals, the net attitudes of this group have appeared to be very close to those we attribute to Nigerians of the elite group generally.[10]

38. The prospects for a change of foreign policy leadership under civilian rule do not argue for great

[9] Over the past several years, however, the United States' bilateral economic and commercial relations with Nigeria have become increasingly strong. Bilateral economic working groups, established as a result of the recent exchange of state visits, are intended to improve the environment for US trade and investment in Nigeria, and to provide a high-level forum for airing views on continuing differences in bilateral relations. The United States is also preparing a response to Nigeria's request for concessional developmental assistance.

[10] See annex F (The Nigerian Ministry of External Affairs).

25X1
25X1

changes in direction. Although [redacted] a number of the senior civilian officials of the MEA may retire with the advent of civilian rule on the ground that the "politicians" are likely to install their cronies in the good jobs overseas, many would seem likely to stay on the chance that their influence (though not the efficiency of the Ministry) might increase under the new circumstances.

39. One complication under civilian rule will be the existence of a National Assembly; another will be the resurgence of political parties. We believe that, while radical views, as held by some students and intellectuals favoring more doctrinaire forms of socialist and "progressive" ideology, will probably be represented in the National Assembly, they are not likely to have much influence on national policy, including foreign policy. It is highly likely that civilian leadership will favor continuation of Nigeria's mixed economy, that business interests will be well represented, and that a pragmatic approach will generally prevail to the extent that emotional commitment to the southern Africa problem makes this possible. Certainly, we do not expect a civilian government dominated by ideological considerations, although it may well be even more driven by domestic political considerations.

40. There is a possibility that the reemergence of political parties, and the regional particularist tendencies that these reflect, will complicate the foreign policy decisionmaking process. This could begin during the transition period, especially if Western initiatives regarding southern Africa should stall, because the military government would then be vulnerable to criticism for having supported those initiatives. Similarly, if these initiatives have not borne fruit before the installation of a civilian government in October 1979, the civilians might find it harder to continue to support negotiations than the military have. But the military themselves may well have reached this point much earlier.

41. Regional particularism may well play a larger role in Nigeria under civilian rule than it has, at least overtly, under the military. In this connection, one point that needs to be kept in mind is that, to the traditionalists of the conservative Muslim north, the influence of "westernization" itself is revolutionary, even though the traditionalist in this region may be more personally receptive to the expatriate adviser or expert than he is to the westernized, educated southern Nigerian. Among younger, educated northern Muslims—still a very small group—"radicalism" takes on a chauvinistic, xenophobic cast, although we have not yet seen evidence that the kind of militant Islamic political ideology espoused by Colonel Qadhafi in Libya is taking hold in Nigeria. If, under civilian rule, such northern elements become more prominent or vocal, they may give Nigerian policy a more militant and suspicious tone. Over a longer term, such elements might, by alliance with "progressives" from other regions, form a more influential group than we now anticipate. Beyond this matter of tone, however, the influence of the Muslim north is likely to remain essentially negative on foreign policy; it limits what the national leadership can do, and northern sensitivities need to be taken into account, but the northern view of things does not in itself take policy in new directions.

42. While other major ethnic groups do have some special interests in Nigeria's foreign relations—there is a Yoruba minority in neighboring Benin, for example—these interests are not likely to impinge on Nigeria's relations with the United States.

43. As we indicated in the foreword to this paper and in the judgments, we continue to believe that the odds favor the achievement of civilian rule on schedule. At the same time, we recognize that there are possible developments that could delay or disrupt the process. These include serious ethnic disorders—produced by aggressive politicking—on such a scale that the military leadership would feel compelled to postpone civilian rule for a time or indefinitely, and/or a coup or coup attempt by disenchanted middle-grade officers who fear the impact of civilian rule on their perquisites and positions as well as on the body politic. While these developments would be distracting to Nigerian leaders, and in that sense affect their ability to focus on foreign policy issues, we do not see them producing a fundamental change of direction.

The Impact of the International Environment

44. We should emphasize that the continuities we see in Nigerian foreign policy assume continuities in the international environment in which this policy functions, and this is not necessarily a safe assumption with regard to Africa. Along with other African leaders, the Nigerian leadership currently appears to feel that it is in fact witnessing new developments:

— The French-inspired concept of an intervention force to protect essentially Western interests in Africa.

— The growing role of the Soviets/Cubans in African affairs.

— The threatened collapse, under internal and outside pressures, of established though not necessarily admirable regimes, Mobutu's in Zaire being the most prominent example.

So far, the Nigerian official reaction has been to treat these problems in established terms, in effect denying that there is anything new here that demands any new approach. Thus, the French concepts are defined as a continuing form of neocolonialism, not new forms; the Soviet/Cuban role in Ethiopia and Angola is accepted under the formula that sovereign states can invite in whomever they please, provided foreign presence does not become permanent; and Mobutu's problem in Shaba is asserted to be exclusively an internal one to be met from internal resources, although even Mobutu technically had a "right" to call for help. Military intervention in Africa is condemned in favor of leaving Africans to resolve African problems.

45. We believe that this kind of reaction will continue to typify Nigerian responses; the Nigerians will be extremely reluctant to abandon a set of positions which in effect assume a continuing correlation of international forces with which they are familiar—one in which the "good guys" and villains each have well-known flaws and in which the United States plays the role of a "heavy" whose heart may be in the right place but who needs constant reminders to keep him on the track.[11]

46. It is possible that some fresh excursion into Africa by the Soviets/Cubans would produce a change in Nigerian attitudes. Such a development would, of course, have to occur outside the southern African context; in that arena, Soviet/Cuban assistance to the liberation forces is welcomed. Elsewhere, the Nigerians see the United States and the USSR as needed fundamentally to balance each other, and their own policy is to maintain a relationship with the USSR that provides them with a useful, although limited, alternative to the predominant position that West Europeans and the United States occupy as sources of capital, technology, and development assistance generally. At this stage, the Nigerians simply do not see that an upset of that balance is in the cards, but if developments in Africa should appear to be leading to a tilt toward the Soviets, the Nigerians would reluctantly look to US and West European action to restore, but only to restore, equilibrium as they understand it.

47. In a large sense, the Nigerians also see the evolution of the nonaligned movement as a useful contribution to balance as well as one which may provide them with greater psychopolitical leverage. Their activity among the nonaligned, within the Group of 77, and regarding the North-South dialogue thus serves not only immediate objectives but also broader goals. To the extent that we anticipate a change in Nigerian activities in this respect, we would expect some gradual intensification of their attention on the nonaligned movement and kindred associations (especially OPEC) as long as these appear productive and Nigeria's other relationships remain stable. If there is a lurch in the direction of "radicalism" in Nigerian foreign policy, it is more likely to be toward the Third World than toward the USSR, even though it would be harder, we think, for a civilian regime in Nigeria to exploit politically the highly technical and emotionally unappealing issues that now occupy the North-South discussions.

Nigeria and the United States

48. It seems to us that this discussion leads to a conclusion not far distant from what we believe the Nigerian view to be: that the future quality of US-Nigerian relationships depends much more on the actions of the United States than on any likely changes in Nigerian policy. US successes or failures, especially with respect to southern Africa, will set the tone. Whatever pretensions the Nigerians have to being major regional actors—movers and shakers—they will quickly assume the posture of victim if things go wrong, and the United States is far more likely to be tagged as the guilty party than are the governments of Western Europe.

49. There is some risk that under civilian rule the Nigerian leadership will be more demanding or more impatient with US performance in southern Africa than the military has been, and the fact that Western Europe offers an alternative source of development assistance gives the Nigerians room to express openly this kind of impatience or dissatisfaction. But we still believe this risk is only a moderate one; certainly we do not foresee Nigeria's turning to the USSR in any significant way as an alternative partner as a result of disappointments over southern Africa.

50. If the question of provision for a multinational African security force persists as a live issue, there is certainly room for dispute between the United States

[11] This view is not confined to Nigerians; Tanzanian President Nyerere has also cast himself as a petitioner to the American conscience. The present administration in Washington is viewed as an advance over previous ones in that it is seen as at least having a conscience to which appeal can be made.

and Nigeria. The Nigerians do not yet see a requirement for such a force; as noted above, they saw the Shaba affair as an internal Zairian matter. A breakdown of security, or a fresh civil war, in some other African area might conceivably produce some evolution in Nigerian attitudes, but we doubt that anything much will be seen very soon. Concern for southern African liberation will continue to take precedence over the broader topic of how Africans can best provide for their security against both internal disruption and external intervention. US insistence that the latter issue needs more urgent attention would be seen as an effort to stir up the Cold War in Africa; and stirring up the Cold War, not the Soviets or the Cuban presences in themselves, is what the Nigerians are likely to continue to react against under either military or civilian rule.

51. At some point, of course, one can foresee that southern Africa will cease to be the kind of problem that it is now, and that the focus of the Nigerian-US relationship will shift to other subjects. Eventually, the Nigerians' attention might well come to center on the kind of political-economic relationships now being tackled in the North-South forums. But unless we are very wrong in our prognoses regarding the prospects for change in southern Africa itself, this time is still far off and speculation about it is not very profitable, more particularly, as we have noted above, because of the technical complexity and political cross-currents involved in North-South issues.